

I have been involved in Emergency Services since 1966. During this time I have been frustrated with conditions that would not allow transmission of messages that were urgent but unable to get through because of congested "emergency" frequencies. A couple of friends introduced me to Amateur Radio, I received my "Tech ticket" and have used Amateur Radio to get messages through when the "emergency" frequencies were "plugged solid". 2 meter has proven very valuable but I can't help but think that the HF bands would make an ideal back-up should the "Traffic Net" or repeater system suffer a catastrophic failure. I would like to learn "CW" "on the job", (actual CW QSOs' with other Hams) and HF privileges would offer this access. Often times people will learn skills if they are offered to them as options instead of "forced" upon them. Having the option of having a "mentor" ask "would you like to move to another frequency and I'll help you with your CW for a few minutes?" would certainly motivate me to learn CW. I honestly think that elimination of the requirement may actually promote "real" use of CW instead of the present "learn it for the test and forget it" situation that we now have.